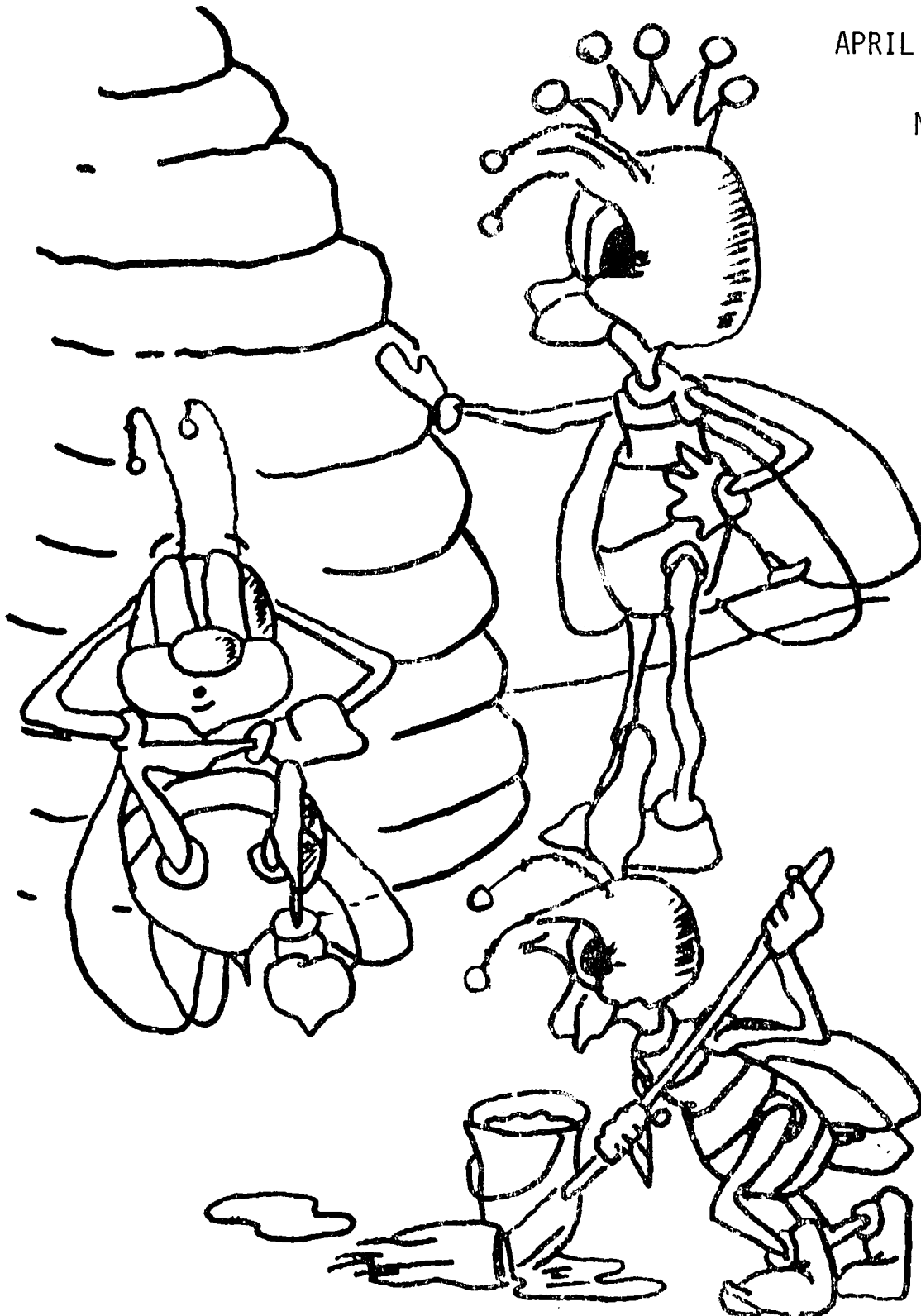


YOUR

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1983

NO 27



Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
Private Bag
Tauranga

Telephone: 82 069

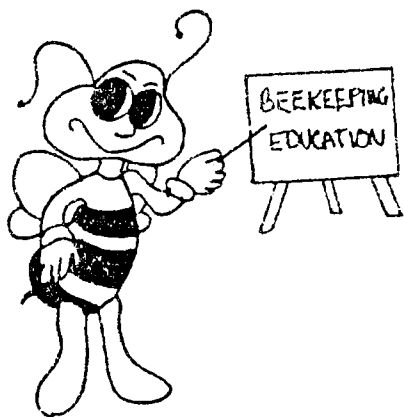
T G Bryant
Apicultural Advisory Officer

Telephone: 65 962 Private

The 1982/83 season has proved to be a year of ups and downs for beekeepers throughout New Zealand. Southland beekeepers have had a disastrous season as a direct result of too much rain and cold temperatures, and at the other end of the scale, the Hawkes Bay suffered a similar result because of no rain. Overall, the total honey crop harvested this season is estimated to be down by 2533 tonnes on the six year average. The crop in the Tauranga apiary district is below average, est 380 tonnes, although some beekeepers have reported their best season ever, while just down the road others haven't fared too well at all.

Cut comb sales have been slow and steady but with a considerable portion of the crop still on hand.

The pollination season was over in a month with 12,500 hives (est) going into orchards in the Bay of Plenty and 810 in Gisborne. The weather was very trying, windy but warm, yet overall pollination is reported as good and I was reasonably pleased with the condition of hives put into orchards but there is still room for improvement.



The price being offered for pollen has taken a dive but the wax price is up - lose one, gain one.

The industry has made gains in other areas - the Bay of Plenty Community College has appointed a beekeeping tutor, Nick Wallingford, and is to establish a beekeeping teaching unit on campus. It is highly probable that a commercial beekeeping enterprise will be set up at the Telford Farm Training Institute in South Otago and a manager/tutor appointed.

Bulletin 267 'Beekeeping in NZ' is being rewritten by Andrew Matheson and should be available at the end of this year.

Research has received a boost with more personnel involved, including a visitor from Canada, Professor Cam Jay.

To sum up the year has been a frustrating one for some, others have done very well thank you, but overall we can look to the future with a great deal of optimism and confidence.

ONE MOMENT;

May be we should not be too optimistic about the export prospects for honey. A recent column in the NZ Farmer, March 1983 reported as follows:

"MAKING HONEY WITHOUT BEES"

Solid sugar in the form of sucrose can be converted to the invert sugars, glucose and fructose, by an enzyme called invertase.

French researchers have found an efficient way of doing this which makes a thick syrup the consistency of honey.

The method is to pass a slurry of crystalline sucrose, to which invertase has been added, down a column packed with particles which provide the large surface area necessary for the reaction to take place.

Instead of a typical support material, such as porous silica, the workers have found that corn grits used instead are not only much cheaper but do the job 30 times as efficiently.

The normal industrial process of using acid to convert the sucrose has the disadvantage of producing a discoloured product which has to be refined. The invertase method causes no discolouration.

So once the "honey" has been approved by the French Government for human consumption it is proposed to build a plant which will supply the several thousand tonnes needed for the whole of the French market.

The process can simply be added on as a further stage to a sugar refinery and is expected to avoid some of the losses of sugar which now typically occur.

- New Scientist, Vol 94 (1307): 575, May 1982

THE DISEASE SITUATION

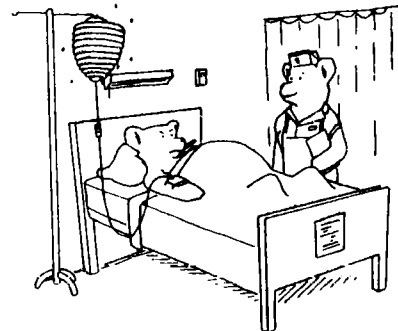
Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries inspectors were very active this year inspecting 269 apiaries, 2402 colonies; 77 diseased colonies were found in 27 apiaries.

A total of 62 diseased colonies were reported by beekeepers - the district total is 139 or 0.46% of all colonies.

This compares with 108 in 1981/82 or 0.42% of total district colonies - a slight increase nothing to be proud of, C'mon chaps, ladies, let's eliminate this scourge.

A note from the Apiary Registrar - there are still some Inspection Statements outstanding. It's late, please let us have them.

By next year it is hoped that all registrations will be on computer. Your statement will come out on computer printout and will list all your known registrations. While there may be some anomalies and mistakes, please bear with us, correct all statements and make the necessary alterations and additions. If you provide us with accurate information,

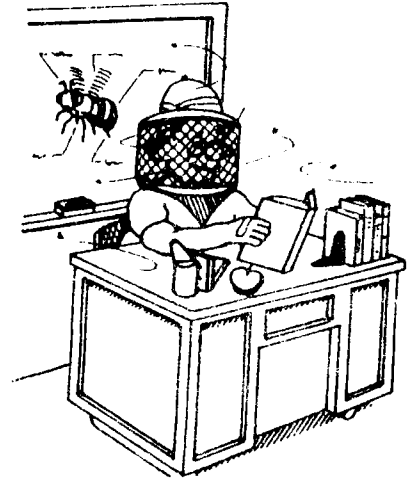


you will/should receive accurate returns in the future.

As some of you are probably aware, Kathy McDonald is no longer with MAF, having purchased a business in Papamoa. The new Registrar is Christine Blackford.

WHAT'S ON

This winter, discussion group evenings are planned in Rotorua, Tauranga, Gisborne and Coromandel. Subjects include - beekeeping overseas, trees for bees, spring management. You will be advised of dates, venues etc in due course.



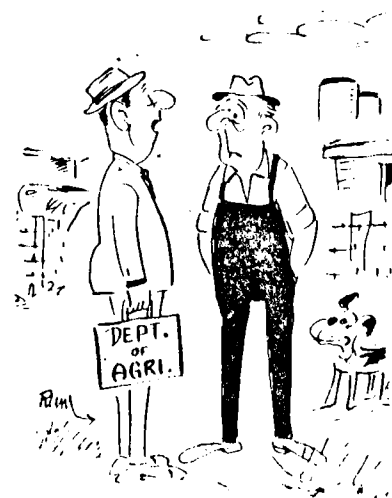
NBA Conference, Nelson, July 26-28 -

The MAF Seminar on the 26th has twin themes; Pollination and Pollen (collection, processing and marketing). After the Conference there is a fun economy tour from Nelson to West Coast via Christchurch and back to Picton. For details write to: NBA Conference Organisers, PO Box 879, Nelson.

This spring, in conjunction with the Community College, there will be a number of short courses, one to three day affairs, on advanced management for hobbyists and part timers (anyone in fact), queen bee raising and pollination. Full details will be available later but if there is something in particular that you believe should be provided by way of a short course then write to N Wallingford, Bay of Plenty Community College, Tauranga.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

As reported earlier the Community College has appointed a Beekeeping Tutor. Welcome Nick. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing him well and now that we have a firm foothold in the educational door let's make sure we keep him busy. The industry has lacked this resource and if it does not take advantage of the opportunity then it could just as easily be lost.



"Mine is a pretty good job. It sure beats farming. I tried that once."

Here is a sample recipe from Saskatchewan promoting Saskatchewan honey, but let's be patriotic and substitute Bay of Plenty (BOP) instead.

SWEET & TANGY CHICKEN

- 1 BOP frying chicken, cut into serving size pieces; or
2 kg BOP turkey pieces

45 ml BOP liquid honey
15 ml prepared mustard
45 ml BOP lemon juice

Combine mustard, honey and lemon juice in a small bowl. Place chicken on BBQ grill about 15 cm (6 in) above slowly burning coals. Cook about 40 mins, turning often. Baste with sauce during last 10 minutes of cooking.

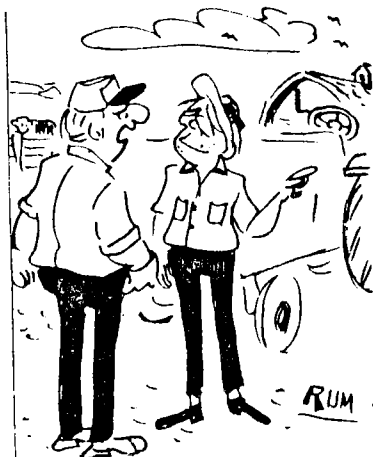
Serves 4 people

While on the subject of honey, numerous people have enquired recently about packing and creaming honey - how to do it, how to keep it spreadable, frosting etc.

Honey for creaming should be cooled (or heated) to about 15 - 18°C before adding starter or seed honey. The packing tank should then be maintained at 14°C during the primary stages of granulation approximately 1 - 3 days.

After packing the honey should be held in a cool room at 10 - 14°C for five days, then removed. It **MUST BE** stored in a room at a constant temperature of 18 - 21°C.

Keeping it in a cool room for more than five days at 10 - 14°C will cause frosting; i.e. the honey contracts, creating air spaces between the honey and the container wall. These are also 'centres' where glucose crystals can grow.



"Why don't you drop out of school and take over the farm now, while you still know it all."



"Well - huh - I'm really not sure HOW much money I make, 'per bee' - huh —"

The presentation of a consistently attractive product is an art and science, not guess work. It is all to do with the type of honey, temperatures, amount of starter, stirring and moisture content. There are plenty of books about on the subject. If you require advice then see your MAF advisor or a competent honey packer.

HONEY FILTER - Arkal 2" Filter, Model 4900

Essentially an irrigation filter, this unit can be adapted for honey. They have proved equal to the stainless steel in-line strainers at one quarter the cost. The ideal arrangement is to have the filter mounted over a baffle tank or sump so honey can drip back before the rings slide down the pipe away from the tank for a quick hose. Blue or yellow rings seem adequate for bulk honey. Like any filter they do not perform well with granulated honey but are far faster to clean than most. Cost - approx \$274.00.

Technical details if you are interested are available from the suppliers.

NZ Agents : Southern Cross Machinery NZ Ltd

96 Glengarry Road

Glen Eden

Auckland

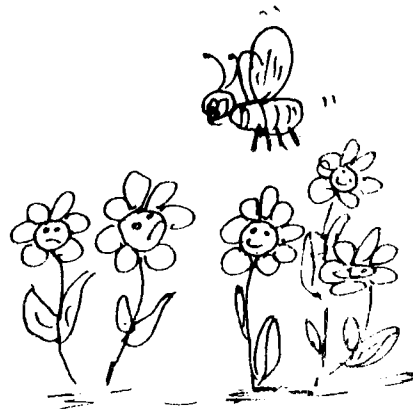
Phone: AK 818 3404



The vet told me to stay away from bee hives.

BITS & PIECES

- * Sugar feeding in autumn - to avoid waste and achieve optimum concentration mix 9 kg of sugar to every 5 litres of water. Ref: The Southern Beekeeper.
- * Ventilation is important. Honey bees can withstand very low temperatures but have trouble with just a few degrees of frost if their hive is too moist. To ventilate warm moisture laden air, provide upper ventilation in the hive.
- * "Bees don't freeze to death, they starve to death". The essentials for successful wintering are: queen-right, adequate stores (3-4 frames minimum), food, disease free, well maintained healthy environment (the hive).
- * Pollen is in short supply in many hives this autumn. Have you checked your colonies' supplies. It may be necessary to take remedial action now if you want strong healthy colonies in the spring.



" IF IT WASN'T FOR ME YOU GUYS WOULD BE EXTINCT! "

- * A new nectar source - In December I saw an experimental plot of Sainfoin, a perennial pasture legume. Very attractive to bees and good honey yields are reported from this crop overseas. Look out for it.
- * I note that Vipers bugloss, Echium vulgare, is appearing on roadsides around Rotorua, Taupo, Maketu and Opotiki. A very good plant, producing slow granulating honey excellent for cut comb. Worth collecting seed if you have a hectare or two to plant for a honey crop. It may be a noxious weed in some Counties.
- * Latest AgLinks out are FPP 533 - Pollen Trap Design; FPP 532 - Pollen Collection and Processing, available from any MAF office. Hot off the press, FPP 538 - Beekeeping: Urban Areas, Management to Prevent Nuisance.
- * Andrew Matheson, AAO, Nelson is off to Jamaica on a UN development programme for three months.
- * John Smith, AAO, Christchurch is off overseas as are Russell Berry and Barry Hosking - the latter two to USA and Canada. Good luck chaps.

- * Australian export honey has been found adulterated with 30% glucose. Local market honey is apparently frequently adulterated. Remember the 'Kangaroo beef scandal'. How about 'Outback house fly honey scandal'.

- * Please get your registered numbers out into your apiaries, preferably branded on boxes. Would the gentleman with some gear branded H86 please contact me as soon as possible.



- * Beeswax Furniture polish recipe:

500 gms beeswax
 85 gms bicarbonate of potash
 9 cups of water
 1.14 litres turpentine

Melt wax in water and bicarbonate of potash. Add turps. Stir until creamy. To add colour use: yellow ochre, alkanet root, shoe polish.

An up market product which will give excellent results.